

COVER SHEET

IN THE MATTER OF THE PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO UNDERCOVER POLICING

2 I, [redacted] HN351 c/o Designated Lawyers, PO Box 73779, London WC1A 9NL, WILL SAY AS FOLLOWS

1. This witness statement is prepared in response to a Rule 9 request dated 12th March 2019 and concerns my deployment as an undercover officer (“UCO”) within the Special Demonstration Squad (“SDS”) from 1974-1975.
2. I have been shown the documents attached to the Rule 9 request but I have not otherwise refreshed my memory by looking at any other documents. Given the time that has passed, my recollection of matters is very limited and I have not been greatly assisted by the documents provided as I have struggled to read them and I do not know their provenance.
3. I am known in this Public Inquiry by my cover name of Jeff Slater. There is a restriction order in respect of my real name. My nominal number is N351.

Personal details

3 4. [redacted] Date of birth and current family circumstances [redacted]

Police career before serving with the Special Demonstration Squad

4&5 5. I joined the Metropolitan Police in [redacted] mid 1960s aged [redacted]. I was posted to [redacted] 6 [redacted] before joining Special Branch in

7 [redacted] Early 1970s as a Detective Constable. My Special Branch roles included work at [redacted]

8 [redacted]

[REDACTED]. Throughout my [lengthy] career in Special Branch I worked across all Special Branch squads.

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6. I did carry out some undercover work prior to joining the SDS. It was not unusual to carry out surveillance work on direct-action, aggressive and potentially violent protest groups in an undercover capacity but my involvement with them would not last for more than a day or so. I would not have used a developed undercover identity and would use a different cover name each time. This practice was typical across Special Branch at the time.

Selection for the Special Demonstration Squad

7. I knew of the existence of the SDS because of conversations I had had within Special Branch but I did not know any detail about the nature of the work other than that it involved full-time undercover work.
8. I have no recollection of how I was selected for the SDS. It is highly likely that SDS managers spoke to me before I joined to tell me about the work but I cannot remember this. I was married at the time of joining the SDS but I do not know whether any SDS managers spoke to my spouse prior to my recruitment.
9. According to the documents I have been shown, I joined the SDS back office on [Spring] 1974 and it appears that I was ready to be deployed from the end of May 1974. I joined the SDS because it seemed to be a good career move as the participants were spoken of highly in general terms within Special Branch and it sounded interesting and would be challenging.

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Training and guidance in the Special Demonstration Squad

10. I did not have specific, formal training before being deployed in the SDS. The training would primarily have been the work that I did while in Special Branch prior to joining the SDS. In addition, while I was in the back office of the SDS before being deployed, I would receive anecdotal information from deployed officers which helped to prepare me. I also attended the SDS weekly meeting with undercover officers before being deployed and would pick up advice from this.

11. I have been asked whether I was made aware of a Home Office Circular document (Doc 1: MPS-0727104). I don't recall being shown it but I certainly knew that I was not to act as an agent provocateur while undercover; this would have been covered in depth during CID training school. I have also been asked whether I was made aware of a 'Tradecraft manual' containing guidance about SDS deployments; such a manual did not exist to my knowledge at the time of my deployment.

12. I was not given any specific guidance on: how far it was acceptable to become involved in the private lives of those I met while undercover; sexual relationships; participation in criminality; encouraging others to participate in criminality; what the ethical or legal limitations of my deployment were; what to do if I was arrested or brought before a court; or what to do if I obtained legally privileged information. It was expected that you would draw on the experience and training you had already received in Special Branch and I am sure that specific guidance would have been given if, for example, you were to be arrested. None of these situations arose for me.

13. I do not believe that I received any further training after my deployment started.

We would receive informal advice and instructions during our SDS meetings and any problems that we encountered would be raised then.

14. I do not recall receiving race equality training while in the MPS.

Undercover identity

Cover name

15. My cover name was Jeff Slater. It was the convention at the time that a deceased child's identity would be used but I don't recall specifically being told to do this. I do not recall the rationale for using a deceased child's identity being discussed at the time and I am not able to comment upon the rationale behind it. I cannot remember the specifics of how I found my cover name or why I chose this particular name but I must have gone to the government birth certificate archives. I did not use any information about the deceased child other than their name and date of birth, which I can no longer recall. I did not otherwise make use of details of their life.

16. I don't believe that my cover background was developed beyond my name and cover employment. I never needed any more detail during my deployment.

17. I have been asked about the guidance given in a document entitled "Penetration of Extremists" (Doc 2: MPS-0724119) in relation to identity and background material. I have no recollection of this document but I know that I did have a rent book and a library card and I may have had a driving licence. I did not have a passport and I do not believe that I had employment documents or pay-slips. I do not recall there being any other written advice about how to create an undercover identity.

Cover employment

10 18. [REDACTED] I was a car washer at a car dealership and also worked for a plumbing supplier but I do not recall the names of the firms. I did actually carry out this work occasionally, probably once or twice per week. I think I was paid a little for the car washing but I can't be sure of this. If I had received money, I would have used it towards my expenses incurred while undercover. This work fitted in with my undercover persona [REDACTED]

11 [REDACTED]

Cover accommodation

19. I had a small flat in North London that I would visit occasionally but did not sleep at. I do not recall how it was arranged. I did not share the accommodation with anyone and I did not live anywhere else in my undercover identity.

Legend Building

20. Prior to deployment I was a clean-shaven, short-haired, typical Copper. I grew a beard and long hair before going undercover and wore different clothing, which was intentionally never washed.

21. I did not visit any places or people to prepare to adopt my undercover persona.

22. I do not remember whether I lived for a time in my undercover identity before approaching my targets.

23. I was supplied with an undercover car to be used to ferry activists around and attend meetings.

Deployment

Infiltration of groups

24. I was tasked to infiltrate the International Socialists (IS) and became a formal member of IS, although I don't remember how I obtained membership. I just remember that I had a membership card. I do not recall the exact dates of my membership but I presume it was from sometime after May 1974 to March 1975, given the dates of my deployment that are apparent from the documents I have been shown. No other groups would have regarded me as a member.

25. I remember very little about how I infiltrated IS. I believe that I went along to a couple of anti-fascist demonstrations and chatted to people that I met there. I presume that I then started to attend IS meetings.

26. I have been asked to review the reporting provided to me and comment upon whether it reflects the reporting I provided. I did not author any of these reports and I do not believe that I have seen them before (with the possible exception of the two that bear my name, although the format of my name at the bottom of these reports – Initial. Surname - is definitely not a format that I would use and this leads me to think that someone else has ascribed the reports to me). I supplied information to the SDS by word of mouth and irregular notes but I never saw the end product that was produced. In as much as I can read the documents given to me, I can only say that in broad terms they contain the sort of information that SDS officers would generally have provided.

27. I cannot say whether there are any missing intelligence reports as I have not seen these documents before.

Tasking

28. I was not told at the outset to target a particular group but I went along to protests and demonstrations at the beginning of my deployment and waited to see which groups I came into contact with. I think I would then have said at the next SDS meeting which groups I had spoken to and would have been told by those senior to me to focus on IS.
29. I knew that I was deployed to pick up any useful snippets of information and feed it back. I was not given more guidance about what information the SDS was interested in. You were an experienced officer and it was assumed that you knew what to look for. We were not specifically told what to do but we would seek guidance at the regular SDS meetings or over the telephone if needed. I do not recall being given instructions about how to carry out my role.
30. I did not give much thought to why I was being tasked to do these things but I understood that it was important to know who the individuals are within the UK that would wish to damage our way of life and the status quo.
31. I was allowed to influence my own tasking to a certain extent. I was encouraged to use initiative and I could have made suggestions if I felt it was appropriate. Given the kind of work we were doing, we had to be given a fair bit of free rein. The nature of the job also provided opportunities to report on matters that you had not specifically been asked to report on. You picked up all sorts of information without knowing whether it would be of use but passed it back anyway. That said, we had a general understanding of which areas Special Branch was interested in and would not stray beyond that.
32. I understood that I could be on the unit for up to three years. I was not provided with information from other sources about my targets. My tasking did not change throughout my deployment.

Premises and meetings with the SDS

33. The SDS operated one or two offices while I was deployed. I would visit the premises to meet with colleagues, discuss problems I may have encountered and meet with my seniors. We attended for a meeting at least once per week with all of the SDS officers and would not go there at any other times. There was no set agenda for these meetings; we would just discuss anything that had arisen over the last week. The weekly SDS meeting was the only setting in which I would meet with undercover officers while deployed. I did not meet with them socially during this time.
34. My fellow officers would have heard about my deployment during the weekly meeting and vice versa. We would talk generally about our work, any problems that anyone had encountered, anything amusing that had happened. We discussed all sorts of things. Most of our discussions were overheard by SDS managers as they were present for the meeting.

Pattern of life whilst undercover

35. I would be in my undercover identity for most demonstrations that happened in London at the weekends and I would attend roughly one meeting of IS per week and would also go to my cover employer about once per week in my undercover identity. I would estimate that I would be in my undercover identity two to three times per week for a number of hours each time.
36. I would be on duty in my real identity at the SDS meeting and would also work from home writing up notes and trying to prepare for the next time I interacted

with IS. I can't estimate how much time this would have taken after so many years.

37. My working life in the SDS was more intensive, more anxious and more debilitating than it had been in the rest of Special Branch. I was anxious and fearful all of the time. The working pattern was more unpredictable and involved more anti-social hours.

Pay and over-time

38. My pay was better on the SDS than it had been in Special Branch because there was more over-time involved. Over-time could be claimed for evening work if you started working earlier in the day and then continued working late into the evening. We were generally expected to work 5 days on followed by 2 days off but sometimes the days off would be cancelled and this could also be claimed as overtime. I would guess that over-time added about 10-15% to my income.

39. I do not recall whether any other factors affected my take-home pay.

Reporting on the International Socialists

40. I have been asked to look at intelligence reports dated 8th August 1974 (Doc 3: UCPI0000007918) and 25th February 1975 (Doc 4: UCPI0000006850). I am confused as to why my name appears at the bottom of these reports and, as I have said above, it is not a format of my name that I would have used. The way the reports are written suggests that the "reliable source" has supplied information to the SDS and I have written it up for them. This would indicate that I was in the back office at that time and I note that the dates are towards

the beginning and end of my deployment but other documents suggest that I was still deployed on 25th February 1975. I assume that I am not the reliable source referred to otherwise I would have just written it as my report. I have no recollection of who the source was.

41. I infiltrated IS and was tasked to do so as discussed above. IS were of interest because they wanted to bring the state down and affect the very fabric of the way we do things. Some members were violent and they knew people who were even worse. There was the potential for protests they were involved in to get out of hand. Part of the reason I was deployed was to gain information about how many policemen were needed to manage their protests. IS's objectives were achieving socialist revolution in this country and worldwide and they would use any means available to achieve this, including violence.

42. I do not remember when I started to attend IS events. The first report I have been given is from 8th August 1974 but, as I have said, I am not sure that this information has come from me. I do not know whether I provided any reports prior to this.

43. I have been asked about a report from a birthday party dated 25th February 1975 (Doc 4: UCPI0000006850), which bears my name. As I have said above, I am confused as to the source of this information. I did attend some social events with activists and if anything of relevance came up I would report it. Information about who was associating with members of IS and whether there are any new people on the scene would be of interest to Special Branch. I was not specifically tasked to attend social event or report upon them but it would be common sense that you would have to attend some otherwise you would not be accepted into the group.

44. I have been asked about a number of reports of meetings that include Geoff Slater as an attendee. I cannot recall whether I spelled my undercover name as Geoff or Jeff but it is certainly possible that I am the Geoff Slater referred to since the dates correspond to my deployment. I have no memory of the meetings referred to.
45. I have been asked about an intelligence report from January 1975 (Doc 5: **UCPI0000012014**) in which it is recorded that Geoff Slater has been appointed as the new "SW organiser". I am afraid that I have no recollection whatsoever of this role, whether I came to occupy it and, if I did, how that happened. I do not recall having any other position of responsibility within IS and I do not believe that I was given any guidance about taking positions of responsibility within IS.
46. I have been asked whether I have authored various reports about the Tottenham branch of IS and about other branches of IS based in North London. I do not believe that I wrote these reports but it is possible that I provided some of the information that is within them and that I am the reliable source referred to in some of them. The reports could also be a composite of information provided by various people. I believe there were other UCOs reporting on IS at the same time as me, although I do not recall who, and even if people were not directly tasked to report on IS, they may have picked up on information about them during their deployment. I have no memory of the information contained within these reports.
47. I have been shown an intelligence report dated 17th December 1974 (Doc 6: **UCPI0000015005**) that records information about individuals applying for or gaining employment at HM Customs and Excise and Royal Mail. I do not know

who the author of this document is. I can only comment that Special Branch would have been interested in employment that was taken up by IS members because they may have created problems within their workplaces by arranging strikes and the like. I cannot say anything specific about the people referred to in this document.

48. I have been referred to an intelligence report dated 22nd November 1974 (Doc 7: **UCPI0000015056**). This report records that IS has approved a policy of increased intervention in industrial disputes. It is possible that I was asked to report on the influence of IS in industrial setting and trade unions but I do not remember this. I imagine that Special Branch might have been interested in trade union activity because of the possible cross-over between IS and trade unionism.

49. In relation to intelligence reports dated 4th December 1974 (Doc 8: **UCPI0000014961**) and 5th December 1974 (Doc 9: **UCPI0000014964**), I was not tasked to report on matters concerning racial equality or sexual equality campaigning. I do not know if I have written these documents or provided the information and I cannot offer any explanation for why this information would have been included.

50. I have been asked about two reports referring to Irish matters contained within the documents I have been provided with. I cannot comment on these specific reports but we were certainly instructed to report on any matters relating to the IRA and the Irish Troubles more generally and this was plainly of relevance to Special Branch given the era.

The reports referred to are UCPI0000014961 and UCPI0000015002 which relate to International Socialist meetings where Ireland and the IRA were discussed.

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51. I have been asked whether I am the author of a number of reports relating to IS that cannot be attributed to any geographical areas. With the passage of time I

am simply not able to say whether I provided the information contained within these reports. As I have said before, I do not think that I actually wrote any of the reports that I have been shown, with the possible exception of the two that bear my name.

52. I have been shown a number of intelligence reports that record membership statistics of IS and the association of certain members with trade unions. I do not recall being asked to report on membership statistics but if they came our way I imagine we would make note of them and pass them on. Special Branch would plainly be interested in the membership numbers of a group that posed a potential risk of disorder and especially violent disorder. I was aware of a policy of entryism into trade unions but I cannot remember anything much more about this in the context of the 1970s. I was not tasked to report on trade unions while in the SDS and would only have mentioned them if I was concerned that a member of IS would seek to disrupt their legitimate activities and use the trade union to further IS's subversive aims.

53. I would have been aware of which other UCOs were reporting on IS at the time and the geographical scope of their deployment but I cannot remember this anymore.

Trade Unions

54. I did not join any trade unions while I was serving as an undercover officer and I did not become involved in any trade union affairs.

Public order and violence

55. I witnessed plenty of serious public disorder and violence while serving as an undercover officer but I am unable to recall the specifics. It would have been during demonstrations that got out of hand. I saw severe beatings of policemen by activists and activists beating up members of the public who intervened. I also saw activists damaging street furniture, cars, waste bins, windows, etc. and trying to take on their adversaries. I also saw violence between counter-protest groups. I was not involved in any public disorder or violence myself.

Subversion

56. Special Branch certainly had a role in countering subversive activity. Special Branch was an intelligence monitoring service and counter-subversion was the nature of its work. Special Branch was on the look-out for individuals and protest groups that were bent on causing disruption or difficulties. It would be impossible to work in Special Branch for any length of time and not realise that.

57. The activity I witnessed with IS was subversive as they were organising to bring about the fall of the state.

58. If our reporting was copied to the security services, I suspect this would be to alert them to anything that could be relevant to their work.

59. I did not have contact with the security services while undercover.

Sexual relationships

60. I did not engage in any sexual activity while in my undercover identity. It did not even cross my mind and it was certainly not something that was discussed within the SDS in my presence.

Other relationships

61. I cannot recall forming particularly close relationships with anyone during my undercover deployment. This may have been due to the relative brevity of my deployment.

62. I did not assume any positions of trust with any of the people I associated with while undercover.

Criminal Justice and other legal or disciplinary proceedings

63. I did not participate in any criminal activity while deployed and I did not provoke, encourage or cause any other person to do so. I was never arrested, charged, tried or convicted of a criminal offence while serving undercover. I did not appear as a witness in any criminal proceedings in my undercover identity and my reporting was not provided for or used in connection with a criminal investigation or prosecution, to my knowledge.

64. I was not involved in any other legal or disciplinary proceedings in my undercover identity.

65. I did not become aware of any legally privileged information while deployed.

Elected politicians

66. To the best of my recollection, I did not report upon elected politicians while deployed. I was only interested in members of IS and associated groups who posed a risk of disorder, violence or subversion. I do not recall these groups containing any elected politicians at the time.

The use to which my reporting was put

67. Once I reported information back to the SDS office, it would be up to my superiors within the SDS to decide who it would be passed on to. I do not know who my reporting was sent to. I think one of the primary purposes of my reporting was to determine the number of police officers that were needed to effectively police demonstrations but I cannot say much beyond this. I hope that my reporting assisted with the assessment and eventual peaceful policing of demonstrations that occurred. It is difficult for me to comment any further on the contribution of my reporting to policing.

Exfiltration

68. The documents I have been shown suggest that my deployment ended in the spring of 1975. I asked to leave the SDS as I found it too debilitating and exhausting, both mentally and physically. My reaction to undercover work was solely due to my personality not being suited to this work and was not a reflection of the support I was given; I felt I was simply not robust enough to complete the role but I did not realise this in advance of my deployment.

69. My request to leave was granted without hesitation. I do not remember the mechanics of my withdrawal and the extent of any planning and supervision that was involved. I remember that I wanted to leave my deployment straight away so I imagine that my withdrawal had to be achieved pretty quickly.

70. I did not maintain any contact with any individuals I had reported upon after my withdrawal.

71. After I withdrew from undercover work I spent a number of months in the SDS back office before returning to general Special Branch work. I undertook general clerical work that assisted the running of the office but cannot recall

anything more specific than this. I may well have helped others to prepare for their deployment but I do not remember this.

72. I have been asked about an SDS document which states that deployments should not usually last for more than 12 months. I do not recall there being a general rule that deployments should only last for 12 months; in fact, I think I expected my deployment to last for considerably longer than this initially.

Managers and Administrative Staff

73. In terms of individuals who were in my chain of command, Derek Kneale was my immediate boss and I think Phil Saunders was the head of the SDS while I was there. I do not recall there being any other managers in the SDS during my time there but there may well have been. I have been shown a list of officers and asked whether they were managers or administrators during my time on the SDS; other than Derek and Phil, I do not remember any of these people being in the SDS but I may simply have forgotten over the years.

74. There were administrative staff within the SDS office who would type up information that we passed back to our manager but I do not recall any of their names. I do not think there were any other administrative staff. I did not come into contact with any of the administrative typing staff while deployed.

Management and supervision: general arrangements

75. I had routine contact with Derek Kneale while deployed. I do not recall having routine contact with other managers. I would keep in touch with Derek via telephone and at the weekly SDS meeting at the SDS flat. I would phone Derek

only when I needed to communicate something to him but this would sometimes be as frequently as daily.

76. I would communicate information verbally over the phone and at the weekly meeting and would also hand over written information at most weekly meetings. Derek always seemed happy to receive my reporting; I do not recall there being any complaints raised about my reporting.

77. I would discuss matters relating to forthcoming demonstrations and meetings of my target group with Derek and everything else in between. Welfare matters would also have been raised during the weekly meeting if relevant. Managers would be able to get a sense of whether you were coping well at this meeting and would discuss any concerns with you but there were no formal arrangements for monitoring our welfare. This has to be viewed in the context of attitudes towards mental and physical wellbeing that were prevalent at the time. Viewed in this context, I would say that welfare monitoring was adequate for the time but I am sure that things would be very different today.

Senior management and oversight bodies

78. A variety of senior officers from within Special Branch would occasionally attend the weekly SDS meeting during my time on the SDS. I cannot recall their names today or the circumstances of their attendance.

79. I do not remember anyone from any outside body visiting the SDS.

80. I did not receive any commendations for my SDS work.

Deployment of contemporaries

81. I have been asked about a list of officers and whether they were in the SDS. I

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recall [HN300] [redacted] [HN68] and Richard Clark being in the SDS at the same time as me. I cannot recall the other names but they may well have been in the SDS.

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82. I do not know whether [HN332] used a cover name while serving with the SDS and cannot remember his involvement with the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign.

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83. I do not know whether Helen Crampton, [HN294] or [HN300] used a cover name. I only recall [HN300] being deployed but I would not have been aware of his cover name.

84. To the best of my knowledge and recollection, none of my contemporary officers committed a criminal offence while undercover; provoked, encouraged or caused a third party to commit a criminal offence; engaged in sexual activity; was arrested, charged or convicted in their undercover identity; was involved in incidents of public disorder, violence or criminal activity; reported any legally privileged information; or reported on the activity of elected politicians.

85. My contemporaries in the SDS provided real-time information about the likelihood of disorder or violence that could occur at any forthcoming meetings, demonstrations or protests. I cannot say how my contemporaries benefited policing or the security services beyond this contribution as I would only be speculating.

Post-deployment

Period immediately post-deployment

86. I do not remember whether I had a period of rest after the end of my time in the field. I spent a couple of months in the SDS back office carrying out clerical work and I expect that I would have been informally debriefed during this time. I was then moved to a role that involved low-stress investigative work.

87. I was not offered further advice or support from the SDS or the MPS after my withdrawal but I am sure that I could have asked for it had I needed any.

Post Special Demonstration Squad police career

88. After I left the SDS I think I was posted to deal with [REDACTED] at New Scotland Yard, which involved investigative and clerical work. I expect I was given this posting as it was a relatively stress-free environment but I did not have any say over the posting.

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89. I was transferred to [REDACTED] I remained within Special Branch until I retired in [mid 1990s] and I worked across all of the squads during my time there. I am unable to set out all of my individual postings given the length of my service. I do not think that my time in the SDS had any impact on my later work.

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90. I do not recall seeking or receiving any intelligence from the SDS in my later Special Branch career but this is not surprising as I expect that any such intelligence would be handled at Superintendent level.

91. My time on the SDS did have a long-term effect on me in terms of my emotional wellbeing and mental health but thankfully I was able to put up with this and get on with normal life. It was not something I could really seek help with due to the need to keep my deployment confidential. There were no welfare services available to me within the MPS at that time.

Leaving the police

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92. I retired from the Police in [redacted] mid 1990s at the rank of Detective Sergeant. After

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retirement from the Police I worked as a [redacted] Details of subsequent career after leaving police [redacted]

[redacted]

Undercover work in the private sector

93. I was not given any instructions about working undercover in the private sector or using aspects of my previous undercover identity in the private sector by the MPS. I did not do any undercover work in the private sector.

Any other matters

94. There is no further relevant evidence that I am able to give.

Request for documents

95. I do not have any documents that are potentially of relevance to the Inquiry's terms of reference and I have not referred to any document other than those included with the Rule 9 request.

Diversity information

96. I am a white British male.

I believe the content of this statement to be true.

Signed

[redacted] HN351 [redacted]

Dated

10th April 2019